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SEARCH ARCHIVES**Festival Players plan three shows for this season**

By Jack Evans

Belleville - You can't get much more Canadian than the coming season for the annual summer theatre prepared by the Festival Players of Prince Edward County.

The three shows, spanning July 8 through August 21, are all distinctly Canadian by creation and content and offer a rich entertainment experience without travelling long distances at a time when many are cutting back on their entertainment and holiday spending, suggests festival artistic director Sarah Phillips.

The opening show should be of special interest to Quinte area residents as it is written locally and based on a true historical incident of a maritime disaster off the shore of Prince Edward County.

This will actually be the "world premiere for this musical play called Ship of Fire, written by county residents Marion deVries and Suzanne Pasternak (who also wrote the popular folk opera, Minerva,) and Bernie Gaw for the script. Pasternak and Tom Leighton collaborated on the music and lyrics for this story of a romance between a young Irish girl and a deckhand on the ill-fated steamship Ocean Wave which was destroyed by fire in 1853 just off the county.

The show opens Wednesday, July 8, at 8 p.m. in the Mount Tabor Playhouse, Milford. The following night, Thursday, is an official opening, with many special guests invited to be in the audience. The show runs Wednesdays through Saturdays until August 25 with matinees also available Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The scene remains in Ontario but 100 years later for the second show of the season, Schoolhouse, by Leanna Brodie. This show is about a young schoolteacher in a rural one-room school facing her first class and is described as "hilarious and heart-warming."

The cast includes a number of young people from the Quinte area playing students. That show opens July 22 in Macaulay House, Picton and runs Wednesdays through Saturdays July 22 through August 8 at 6:30 p.m. There are matinees at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

An award-winning play, Colours in the Storm, by Jim Betts, is the third and final show for this season, based on the mysterious death of famous Canadian painter Tom Thomson in Algonquin Park in the early years of the 20th Century. It runs Thursday, August 6, through Saturday, August 15 and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday August 18, 20 and 21 at 8 p.m. in Fields on West Lake, just east of Wellington of Highway 33. There are also matinees at 2 p.m. on August 8, 12, 14 and 15.

Tickets for all shows are \$29.95 for single adult, with discounts for preview performances (before opening nights), seniors, students and groups. There are also special "flex passes" for more than one performance or show. Full details are on the theatre company's web site or by telephone, toll free

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